

## A Great Man Has Gone On

To A. M. Murdock, by Oscar A. Kirkham

He lived as men should live--at their best. He knew no fear. He met each hour with courage that was inspiring. It was building a bridge on the Duchesne River when the torrent threatened any minute to carry him and the bridge away, he stood amid stream and called for ropes, chains, and more timber.

The night was never too dark with storm or the journey too long if there was someone in need that he knew needed help. In his last hours when a frail body could scarcely respond, he said to the loved ones about him, "Well, let's decide what we want to do," and then with the will of a great soul he forced his frail body to respond. It was a real inspiration to see him stand where a million others would fall.

He was a pioneer. He always wanted to blaze new trails. When the land of Eastern Utah was opened up, the drive within him to tackle a real job lured him on. He left the lovely valley of Wasatch County and spent his hard earned fortune helping to develop new homes. The pioneer spirit belonged to him and he belonged to it. He claimed the kingdom of wilderness with courage and faith and toil. He has made his bed on mother earth and camped at a hundred camp fires. His prayer was the cowboy's prayer.

O Lord, I've never lived where churches grow;  
I've loved creation better as it stood  
That day you finished it, so long ago,  
And looked upon your work and called it good.

Just let me live my life as I've begun!  
And give me work that's open to the sky;  
Make me a partner of the wind and sun,  
And I won't ask a life that's soft and high.

He has left to his children, his grand children, and those who know him the rich heritage of a great life. To be small, unclean, dishonest did not belong to him. He walked straight, he rode straight, he lived straight. You felt the power of his personality whenever he was near. He demanded your attention and respect.

He was truly a religious man. It was hard for him to speak in public, but he gave a sack of flour freely to one in need, he mended a harness for an Indian, he took a burr from a child's nose and relieved the pain. He truly served his fellow man. When the final hour came he met it with clear mind and with faith in God. His last words to his loved ones were, "Say a prayer." And when that prayer and blessing was spoken he went to sleep and passed on.

I imagine I see him now on his old favorite grey horse "Eagle" riding away out into the sunset over the hill into the dim beyond to meet his father, mother, wife, and loved ones. Good-by, "Al." You were a man and a blessing to me. My little help was always small compared to knowing you, and feeling the strength of your life. If we merit a place where worthy men go, we'll find you there.